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515 Dirty he and his wife always are, but theirs is the dirt of the field, a thing totally different from the dirt of the town. He never washes his clothes till they are about to drop off, and then he replaces them. He and his good wife are covered with body lice, and reek of camel manure and other choice odours, but the important parts of the body are kept clean, and the wife bathes her hair once a week in she-camel's urine, and thus rids her head of vermin for a few days.

167 Both the Badawin and his women are envious to a degree, and cupidity is the breath of life to them. Both are as full of *hasad* and *tama'* (envy and cupidity) as anyone in this world could be, and they never tire of saying that others around them suffer from these vices but never they themselves. *Hasad* takes the form of backbiting at every opportunity, and disparaging the efforts and good name of anyone who happens to be better off. His *tama'* is proverbial and has caused him to be dubbed by certain Westerners "the arch parasite of world society". True it is that you can make a Badawin man or woman do pretty well anything in this world except (and here I speak for the desert only) sacrifice his or her honour, by the offer of money.

Yet with all these faults I have found the Badawin and his wife to be the most lovable and delightful of all people, just primitive Adams and Eves, like their ancestors.

771 The true Badawin is a deeply religious man, and his hard life in the desert with its perpetual dangers to man and beast increases his sense of nearness to and dependence on his Maker. The grim scenery which surrounds him, the wide sandy deserts, the blood-colour of blazing sunsets, the deep yellow-black of the dust storms, a very incarnation of monstrous evil, and last but not least the devilish flicker of the witch's oven, as it trembles above the ground, with its cruel sister the ever-deceiving mirage, all tend to convince him that the One and Indivisible God is near him always and if only he be a true Musulmán will help him when peril is about. The thought of God is always with him, and the name of Allah is perpetually on his [788] lips. He prays ceremonially five times a day. He can and will do 577 nothing without invoking God's aid. After his duty towards God, comes duty towards his neighbour, and to a lesser extent towards himself. His whole code can be summed up in the following few sentences:

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The Shepherd Boy

Chap. III

At 4 a.m. one of the men-servants gives the 'adhan (call to prayer), with which the day commences. It is still quite dark, but the prayer-call has roused the camp. The women also pray, but in their own tent. After prayers, the woman whose duty it is to make the daily supply of *leben* (sour milk), starts rocking her goatskin to and fro on the *mirjahah* (wooden tripod from the centre of which it hangs). According to the tribe they belong to, some women sing when at this work, others do not.

The woman of the house then orders a little bitter coffee or tea (a modern innovation) to be prepared and gives some to the shepherd and the camelherd, who with the dawn will start off on their day's duties. With the coffee she hands them a supply of dates; part of this is eaten on the spot and part put into a little leather bag as the day's ration. If coffee or tea is scarce, the men are given a bowl of milk. While this is being done, another servant whose duty later will be to go and fetch water, etc., looses the lambs from inside the tent, where each has been attached by a woollen loop to a central rope during the night, and allows each lamb to be suckled by its mother. This done, the lambs are tied up again. The grown-up animals are counted to see that no wolf has stolen one during the night, and off they are sent to graze in charge of the shepherd boy. As the sheep are weak from lack of fodder and the long summer, they will be sent a couple of miles at most. There the shepherd-boy amuses himself one way or another till the sun gets up and makes him feel inclined to rest. He thereupon plants his staff* in the ground and hangs his *'abba* on top. This is enough to deceive the sheep into thinking the shepherd is standing near them and watching. They will not wander; the shepherd goes to sleep. There is no danger by day while he is in sight of the camp.

After the sheep go the camels. A few of these, being in extra poor condition as the result of the summer, find difficulty in rising. They are given a mouthful of dates to encourage them; one or two may have to be helped up, protesting with growls and burblings as their tails are seized and given an upward twist. They are all ready now and the herdsman bursts into song of encouragement and leads the

* Called *mikhyal*. *Mikhyal* is the special stick which shepherds keep to hang their *'abbas* on to prevent sheep and lambs from wandering. Every tent has one.

Najdi and Iraq sheep take no notice of the *mikhyal*, only the black sheep of Hasa and Kuwait. [See Bible. "Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me"—here "staff" is undoubtedly the Arabian *mikhyal*.]

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Rejoicing

Ch. III

At length dawn breaks. Prayers, 512 [188] 182

genuine prayers of heartfelt thanks are said and the storm passes away. What a scene daylight brings! Each tent, like a little Noah's ark, is perched safely on its small Ararat, and a sea of fresh water for a couple of miles all round gives the appearance of the Flood of Bible story. Away to the right are some low hills, and to the left one can see the water tumbling down their sides as the various nullahs *sail* (the Arab word for running in spate). You can hear the dull roar of these distant water-courses running full. The summer has ended at long long last. The Badawin world comes to life and is happy once more. "Now we shall see the *fagul* (truffles)", cry the delighted children.

(The above was a personal experience of 2nd November, 1933.)

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Method of Skinning Animals

Under (*b*) we get the *'akka*, the *madhara* and the *jerâb*. 415

The *'akka* is the name given to a sheepskin used for storing *dehen* (clarified butter).

The *madhara* is the same but is made out of a lamb skin.

The *jerâb* is made out of a young gazelle's skin, and is used for storing coffee beans.

BADAWIN METHOD OF SKINNING ANIMALS

(*a*) *Sheep and Goats.* 281

The carcase is suspended head down, and the skin is 231 opened up behind the hind legs and under the tail by one single cut. It is then peeled off downwards towards the head. In the finished article, the opening at the neck end becomes the filling end, while the original cut at the tail end is sewn up together with each leg.

(*b*) *Camel.*

The cut is made from the head along back of neck to top of hump and down again to tail. Both sides are then peeled off in outward direction. Finally each side is removed separately by a cut along centre of belly and under the neck.

When killing a camel, the head is drawn round to one of its flanks and tied by the halter in that position. The jugular vein is then cut close down to where the camel's neck comes out of the body. This is the exact opposite to the method used for killing sheep and goats. The incision in their case is made immediately behind the jaw bone.*

When cutting an animal's throat, be it animal or bird, the invocation [188] "Bism Illah al Rahmán al Rahím" (in the name of God the Merciful and Compassionate) must invariably be made before the cut is made.

* Exactly in centre of the Adam's apple.

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B 515 k 515 effect by turning the lips saffron-red. This is more commonly used by townswomen than by their Badawin sisters.

DRESS FOR THE HAJ

K 788 292 B 788 292 Just as the man wears the *'ihrām*, a white loin cloth and white shoulder wrap when performing the pilgrimage, all Arab women must wear a special costume* when they enter the precincts of Mecca on pilgrimage. This consists of

(*a*) Green *sirwāl* (pantaloons).
(*b*) Green *thaub* (muslin over-dress).
(*c*) Green *dishdāsha* (frock).
(*d*) Black *'abba*.
(*e*) *Milfa* (veil).

K 765 When a woman, especially a townswoman, is in mourning she also wears green clothes.

HENNA AND ITS USES

B 302 K 302 The use of black henna (*saumar*) for the soles of the feet and hands, and red henna (*hinna*) for the tips of the fingers and toes is universal among *hadhar* townswomen. The Badawin girls use only red henna and then only to decorate their hands, finger nails and toe nails. They do not decorate the rest of their feet. Usually the henna is applied three times, so as to get the right shade. The henna is powdered and mixed with water till a fairly liquid paste is made. It is then applied very thickly and carefully, with a wooden stick, on the hands or feet in accordance with the pattern desired. It is then allowed to dry quickly in front of a fire until the paste cracks and falls or is picked off. This is done three times, or four if a very dark colour is required.

Some women prefer that the henna markings should be black, especially for the feet. To arrange this, another paste is made from powdered lime (*nūra*) and powdered crystal ammonia (*shanada*) and is applied over the orange henna markings. At once the orange mark-

K 841 B 841 * If a woman has her period when she enters the sacred precinct of Mecca to perform the Haj, then her pilgrimage is null and void, as she is considered unclean. Several Arab ladies of Kuwait have enquired from the lady doctor when about to go on the Haj, if she could give them medicine to delay periods when due.

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which would alleviate the fever. As the child's strength declined, the silent grief of the mother was a sore thing to see. I tried hard to persuade her to take him to the doctor in Kuwait, but in vain. One morning according to my custom I came to visit the sick child. As I approached Sarah's tent, Sarah came out to greet me dressed in her best festive garments. Smiling and dry-eyed, she invited me as usual into her portion of the tent. Her father was away. I sat down, suspecting something, I knew not what, but I said nothing. Sarah made coffee and brought it to me to drink. She even joked and told an amusing story. Presently I said "Where is little 'Abdullah? How is he?" Poor Sarah with a great effort choked down a sob and pointed to a small heap of earth not twenty yards from the tent. "There he lies," said she, "half an hour ago I laid him to rest; God gave him to me, and God has taken him, thanks be to God."

Just then Sarah's father came up, and when I expressed my sorrow and sympathy to him, he laughed loud and gruffly and said, *Al hamd ul'Illah* (the praise be to God). "He will give us another, and perhaps many more. We 'Ajman are fighting men, and God in his mercy does as he pleases, we must always laugh at death, whether it comes by sickness, or by bullet." The whole picture left an indelible mark on my mind and it will be long before I forget the dry-eyed sorrowing Sarah.

The poor girl lost her husband a year later—he divorced her because he couldn't return from Iraq. Little Sarah eventually went to Najd and Riyadh, and there married one of Bin Sa'ud's principal *fidáwis* or guards. She wrote and told me a year after, that she had got another little boy. My diary records also that in October 1933 she presented her husband with a little girl. In 1936 I heard through her father that smallpox had carried off one of the children. Poor Sarah.*

PRAYER

The Badawin is very punctilious about his prayers. Whether in camp or on the march, he solemnly prays five times a day according

* Sarah came up to Kuwait from Riyadh in February 1938, and once again we saw our old friend. She came with her father and showed us her new baby boy. She said she had a girl of four also, whom she had left in her tent in the desert.

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788 to Muslim rule. If possible he prays in company, as there is more virtue in this than praying alone. The times for prayer are:

(*a*) Before dawn (*al fajar*) when a single hair if held before his eyes can be seen by the person praying.
(*b*) At Noon (*dhuhur*).
(*c*) Afternoon (*'asar*) calculated at three and a half hours after Noon prayers.
(*d*) Sunset (*maghrab*). This is always twelve o'clock to the Arab.
(*e*) After dining (*al 'asha*) this is calculated to be one and a half hours after sunset.

Almost invariably one of the party first gives the regulation prayer-call, and all hurriedly prepare by ablutions if water is near, or by going through the washing motions in sand, if no water is at hand. The sight is a simple and inspiring one, and I for one always remove my European head-dress when in the presence of the Badawin at prayer. Everything gives way to this prayer hour, and often in the midst of the chase or hunting gazelle or *hubara* there is a halt for prayer, and for a time everything is forgotten except man's duty to God.

Every Badawin camp or tent has near it the following mark scored on the surface of the ground:

Mecca.

It indicates the *masjid* or communal prayer ground. The leader of the prayer stands in front of the loop, the bulge of which faces Mecca, and the others stand behind him and parallel to the side lines.

Occasionally one also finds in odd places in the desert the following plain looped figure, which is the mark made by a man praying alone.

Mecca.

Badawin women pray regularly also, but apart from their menfolk and usually in the privacy of their tents.

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Little Hussa bint Salim al Muzaiyin learnt her prayers at the age of 788
twelve, and at thirteen and a half prayed regularly five times a day. Her mother Amsha was equally careful about her prayers, and even went so far (when I was once alone in camp) as to visit me privately and try to convert me. When my wife went to England later, she repeated her talks in this connection, naïvely promising to find me one, two or even three little Badawiyah girls as wives if I joined the Faithful. "You are one of us now," she said, "become a Muslim and be happy, our girls are good, and it is pleasant to live in the desert and have your own children for ever around you." When I said to her "What would Mrs. Dickson say?" the answer came back swiftly, "She will never mind, provided you let her remain the Shaikhah and put the little Badawin brides under her orders. We all do it and understand our place, and the greatest happiness in the world is for man to possess woman."

THE ORIGIN OF THE "CALL TO PRAYER"

My old friend Haji 'Abdullah al Fadhil told me the following story 173
at Kuwait on 9th January, 1934. He said he had got it from the *hadith* 788
(tradition) of Muslim and Bukhari, and that I could therefore accept it as true.

In the early days of the Prophet, and when Islam had just begun to take hold, no one had yet thought how to gather the people to prayer, and there was no method laid down for calling the people together. The problem, however, had to be faced, and the leaders began to talk about it. At an important meeting on the subject, some suggested a bell such as the Christians used, others suggested the blowing of a horn as was the custom among the Jews. Yet others suggested the gong, in vogue among Hindus and others.

Just then Omar came in and said he had had a dream, and in his dream he had been told that the best plan was for a man to get up, take up his post in a prominent position, and call the faithful to prayer in the words "'Allah-u-Akbar", etc. His suggestion was listened to with interest, and was being discussed from every point of view, when 'Ali the son-in-law of the Prophet came in and said he had had a dream similar to Omar's.

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173 The coincidence was so remarkable that the elders present decided
788 that Omar's suggestion was quite the best one they had heard. They accordingly referred the matter to the Prophet, who decided in favour of Omar's and 'Ali's method.

The Prophet then called Billal, his freed slave, and having instructed him how to call the Faithful to prayer, Billal mounted a house-top and gave the first call to prayer that was ever sounded. The *'adhan* has remained unchanged from that day.

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CHAPTER XII

Food and Hospitality

262 The well-to-do Badawin, such as our man Salim al Muzaiyin or the shaikh of a tribe, has one square meal a day, usually in the evening. This consists of plain rice cooked in *semen* (ghi), a few dates dipped in butter, some *leben* (butter-milk), finishing up with coffee. In the early morning he starts the day with some *leben* and dates, also coffee. He does not often eat meat himself, because he cannot afford to do [574] so. Should a guest of standing arrive, the host will always kill a sheep or lamb for him, which goes the round of the family after the guest has had his share.

The poor Badawin, and the great majority of Badawin are poor, get one meal a day consisting of dates and camel's milk, with a very occasional dish of plain rice or a piece of bread.

The very poor Badawin, such as the herdsman (*shdwi*) who tends the sheep or camels of the more fortunate, gets nothing but camel's milk. Very rarely he gets some dates also, and still more rarely a bit of rice and meat when his shaikh or employer has a guest, his share being the entrails of the sheep that has been killed.

Speaking generally, in the province of Hasa rice is eaten where possible in preference to bread. The opposite is the case in inner Najd, Qasim, etc. The reason is obvious: wheat is grown in Najd and [264] rice has to be transported there. The Badawin, like all other Muslims, eats with his right hand only and gives it a cursory wash before starting his meal. He is always hungry, and as a result if he can get such things as locusts, edible monitors (*dhub*), game of any sort and even foxes, 788 he will eat them with relish. Speaking generally, the Badawin proper will eat anything that comes his way, especially if no one is looking, though he must always ceremonially cut the throat of any animal or bird he snares or shoots, saying as he does this: "In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful" (*b'ismi'llah al Rahman al Rahim*).

[pages 187 and 188 contain no textual material]